

TFC FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION, RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING EVENT
By Shivani Patel Escamilla, Psy.D., MHA - Treatment Foster Care
Program Coordinator - Child Welfare Division



On June 2, 2014, over 100 Treatment Foster Care (TFC) foster parents and Foster Family Agency staff, along with LACDMH and DCFS program staff, convened their annual Treatment Foster Care Foster Parent Appreciation, Training and Recruitment event at the California Endowment Center. This event is held every year in order to recognize and celebrate the hard work and dedication of TFC foster parents who strive to provide a healing home to foster youth who require more intensive mental health services as part of their recovery efforts.

This event is also used to showcase the different strengths and benefits of becoming a TFC foster parent to potential caregivers who are considering becoming a foster parent for this program. Recruiting is important because Los Angeles County does not have enough TFC homes to provide services to all of the foster youth who are eligible for services. Thus, significant energy is spent on recruiting foster parents for TFC, as well as appreciating and supporting the current foster parents who are part of the program.



Twelve Foster Family Agencies participated in the festivities and spent time recognizing exceptional foster parents by awarding gifts and certificates of appreciation. The festivities also included numerous raffles and various self-care activities. Participants also received training entitled, "Reaching Children Through Play: Play Based Tools for Caregivers of Treatment Foster Care Clients", from Ken Schwartzenberger, LCSW, RPT-S. He explained how foster parents can use play therapy techniques to strengthen relationships and help foster youth heal after experiencing significant trauma. Attendees participated in experiential exercises and received informational articles and handouts on the impact of trauma on children.

Rebecca Grande, Program Manager of the Village Family Services, one of the largest Treatment Foster Care providers in Los Angeles County summed up the event by saying, "This is one of the most important days of the year for all of us. TFC is a life changing foster care program that promotes not only the permanency, safety and well-being of our youth but their success! We take pride in choosing our TFC foster parents and our success is a reflection of how committed and talented our foster parents are. They spend time and effort getting specialized training because of their genuine commitment to helping our foster youth heal. Our program works!"

